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Every once in a while, after exhausting every other plausible alternative, Congress does the right thing. On Tuesday, the House of Representatives voted to prohibit federal funds from being used to build a celebrated bridge to connect the Alaska town of Ketchikan to Gravina Island, population 50. The bridge, known across America as the "Bridge to Nowhere," became such a symbol of federal spending excess that polls found that more Americans knew about the bridge than knew the name of their local congressman.

Credit goes to Rep. Mark Kirk of Illinois for pushing through the money-saving amendment that nixed the project on Tuesday. Heritage Foundation budget experts had called the \$320 million bridge "perhaps the most unworthy federal construction project in history." It would have been as long as the Golden Gate Bridge and rise 80 feet higher than the Brooklyn Bridge. Then again, Senator Lisa Murkowski's relatives own land on remote Gravina Island -- which perhaps explains how this boondoggle got as far as it did.

Rep. Kirk tells us that with as many as one-third of all roads and bridges in America in need of repair, "this Alaska bridge never made any sense for taxpayers." Yet he seemed as surprised as anyone that his pork-culling amendment passed. The Alaska delegation is none too happy. Earlier this year, Senator Ted Stevens threatened to quit the Senate if the bridge funding was zeroed out.

Originally, the bridge to nowhere project was an earmark in the federal highway bill, but taxpayer outcry across the country forced an embarrassed Congress to pull the earmark. Alaskan legislators then said they would use their unallocated federal highway gas tax money to build the bridge. The Kirk amendment squashed that plan. This means, if Alaskans want the bridge to nowhere, they're going to have to pay for it themselves. What a concept.